

Series II
Subjects Files,
1916-1973

Box 14, Folder 8

Correspondence,
Letters received from
C.H. Kawakami
regarding translation
work,... 1950

0236



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO
CHK No. 1

5 September 1950

Dear Commodore Bates,

I have been working now for three weeks on the Leyte documents, and it is high time that I made an initial report to you on the progress accomplished. I hope that this will meet with your satisfaction.

Most of this initial period has necessarily been devoted to assembling the Japanese documentary materials and hastily scanning and tabbing them to indicate what useful information they contain. With regard to the physical assembling of the documents, I have succeeded with Mr. Pineau's assistance in obtaining either from the Archives or WDC about 75% of the sources indicated on your list. The remaining 25% includes some documents which should be of key importance, judging from the contents as described in the WDC acquisition lists. Archives and WDC are presently endeavoring to track down these documents, and I trust that they will soon be available.

In addition to the sources on your list, I have instituted a search for others which might have been overlooked. This search has been facilitated considerably by the turning over to Mr. Pineau of the WDC card index file. Reference to it has already uncovered a few additional documents of usefulness to the Leyte study, and others may turn up as I go along.

I have also obtained from the Army Historical Division copies of the Japanese naval monographs bearing on the Leyte battle. I am of course fully aware of the limitations of these post-war studies compiled by the Japanese Second Demobilization Bureau, but they will at least be valuable as a guide to the primary sources, and where such sources are altogether lacking, the monographs may help to fill in the gaps.

I have not yet finished scanning all this voluminous material, but on the basis of what I have gone through so far, it appears that, on the operational level, there will be no lack of detailed information. The battle reports of the ships and units involved generally contain detailed records of events and of incoming and outgoing messages, as well as movement and action charts and "battle lessons" commentaries. We may encounter some gaps on the Surigao action, however, since almost all of Nishimura's ships were sunk.

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5 September 1950

Presently, I am devoting primary attention to the command planning phase, since this logically comes first and covers three of the seven subjects which your letter of 29 June to Captain Burrowes indicated should receive first priority. The three priority subjects covered in the planning phase are your (a) Japanese command relations, (f) Japanese tasks assigned, and (g) Japanese general concept (Sho No. 1). When I have given you all the data you need on these topics, I shall proceed to the other four, which cover the information available to Japanese commanders, Japanese searches, and the disposition of Japanese surface and air forces at the time of the Allied landing on Leyte, 20 October 1944.

The Sho plans were developed in the latter part of July and first part of August 1944, well in advance of our assault on Leyte. It consequently appears necessary to trace them through from that period. On the basis of research done this far, I have drawn up a reasonably complete list of the basic planning orders on the various command levels starting at the top with Imperial General Headquarters. The list, enclosed with this letter, is an extensive one and possibly includes a number of documents which it may prove impossible to find among the existing and available Japanese materials. However, I shall do my best to track them all down, or at least ascertain their essential substance if the texts themselves are unavailable.

Just the planning orders alone represent a considerable volume of material, but fortunately not all of them are untranslated. Some are already available in English, either in USSBS publications or in ATIS Limited Distribution Translation No. 39, Parts I-XII (translations of the documents recovered from the cruiser Nachi in Manila Bay in 1945). You are undoubtedly familiar already with these materials. In my attached list, therefore, I have merely made notations to indicate what orders are already translated to my knowledge, and where they are to be found. I am presently trying to obtain a microfilm copy of the original Nachi documents, so that in case you should find something unclear or doubtful in the ATIS translation of these documents, I can check against the Japanese.

I shall proceed with my search for the other basic orders included in my list, and as I discover them, I will translate them and forward them to you. Should you consider any of the listed documents unnecessary for your purposes, I trust that you will let me know. To assist you in judging, I have inserted parenthetically in the list the known or indicated subject of the order.

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5 September 1950

I hope that I am starting out on the right foot and that my suggested approach to the translation work meets with your approval. Whatever further suggestions or guidance you care to give me I shall appreciate and do my best to carry out.

Sincerely,


Clarke H. Kawakami

1 Encl.

Commodore Richard W. Bates USN(Ret.)
Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island



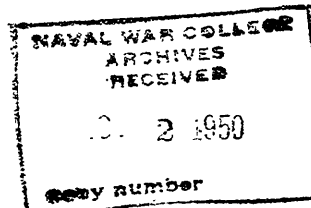
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK No. 2

31 Oct 1950

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN
Naval War College
Newport, R.I.



Dear Commodore,

I received yesterday your letter of the 25th, accompanied by the CincPac Bulletin containing a brief analysis of the Sho Operation plan on the basis of the Nachi documents. The CincPac analysis appears to have been drawn mainly from Task Force (or, as I have translated it, Mobile Force) Operations Order No. 76 of 10 Aug 44, a translation of which is happily available in the ATIS Limited Distribution Translation of the Nachi documents (No. 39, Part I). In the absence of the basic Combined Fleet order for the Sho Operations (Operations Order No. 85, 4 Aug), Task Force Order No. 76 is your best available source concerning the overall Sho plan as it was originally conceived. I would also like to call your attention to a related document also translated in ATIS Lim. Dist. Trans. No. 39, Part I, pp 37-43. This is an explanatory statement by the Chief of Staff, First Mobile Fleet, issued the same date as Order No. 76, and elaborating on the contents of the order. These two documents, I think, will provide you with adequate material for your discussion of the general concept of the Sho Operations.

As noted in the list of the basic planning orders submitted to you earlier, Parts V and VIII of ATIS Lim. Dist. Trans. No. 39 also contain a few document translations bearing on the Sho plans in general. Part VIII contains Combined Fleet orders, but unfortunately the all-important separate operational outlines attached to Orders No. 83 and 85 are missing. In Part V, I would call your attention to pp 5-25 in particular (Second Diversion Attack Force Operations Order No. 1, 10 Aug 44). This supplements Task Force Order No. 76 in rounding out the general overall picture of the Sho plans.

Following our recent talk, I revised my report on the actual sortie strength, order of battle, and tactical make-up of the Mobile Force Main Body in an effort to make it come a bit closer to your requirements. I omitted the background notes, which appeared only to have confused the issue, and will give you the background material separately and in different form, sticking as far as possible to actual translations. I also appended verbatim translations of a few of the specific items covered in the source citations covering the lists of component units and ships. However, in case of tables of this sort, where they are drawn up on the basis of bits of information from various sources, I continue to stick to the view that providing you with an amorphous mass of translated bits from here and there would be less efficient and more time-consuming all around than my drawing up the tables, as I have done, and listing in detail the sources on which they are based. In general, however, I fully recognize that my

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job is merely to select portions of Japanese documents bearing on specific points of inquiry indicated by you, and provide you with translations of the pertinent material. This procedure I shall of course follow wherever possible.

I have also completed order-of-battle and tactical organization tables covering the other surface forces involved in the Leyte action, so that you now have a complete and detailed picture of the actual forces engaged. These are the actual sortie forces, so that the time is not the same for all. I realize, of course, from what you told me recently that you will also need to discuss the forces on hand as of one fixed time prior to the actual sortie, i.e., either as of 17 Oct (Sho No. 1 Alert) or as of 18 Oct (Sho No. 1 Activation). Personally, I would think that 17 Oct would be the most logical dividing point between background and the actual development of the action on the Japanese side.

I hope to provide you shortly with all necessary data on the overall command set-up for Sho No. 1. Do you wish me to give you first the command arrangements as they stood on 17 Oct, following up with data on the modifications which were made between then and the time the action began? Or do you wish the picture as it finally stood when the forces went into action? Also, do you desire me to work up a diagram such as you had in your Savo Island study (I obtained a copy of this on the Monday following your visit), or do you merely desire translations of orders, etc. affecting the command set-up for Sho No. 1?

I have been looking for a concise background summary in the available Japanese sources, since you indicated that you do not propose to delve too deeply into the background. About the only suitable thing I have found is the Japanese 2nd Demob Bureau post-war monograph covering the Leyte naval operations. I shall translate the necessary portions of it if you consider this an adequate source for the background data. This, unfortunately, is one of the monographs of which the Army Historical Division has so far received no English translation from Tokyo.

In accordance with your instructions, I sent over to Captain Burrowes the file of WDC English translations which I showed you, and requested his assistance in having the portions of value to you copied. His secretary just phoned me that she is starting on this project, and I shall forward you the typed copies as they are completed.

With regard to the matter of a standard form for translations, I am not aware that there is any. I shall be glad to adopt whatever form you desire. It appears that WDC for the most part used legal-size paper and put the WDC Document number in the upper right-hand corner. So far, however, I haven't seen any legal-size paper around the Navy Department, and Capt. Burrowes' secretary just told me that she was going to have to use standard-size paper to copy the translations I requested. As a possible standard form, I would suggest a top title line from the regular left-hand margin, all caps, saying "Translation of such-and-such a document (War Diary Desron 10, 1-30 Oct 44), WDC Document _____, NA _____."

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If it were a translation of excerpts only and not of the whole document, as generally will be the case, I would indicate this in the title line. I hardly think that page references to Japanese documents are of any practical use. In many cases, too, the documents have no page numbering, or if they do, it is the delightful Japanese system of giving a single number to both sides of a page.

I note that in your studies thus far, you cite only WDC Document numbers. Of course, this is quite sufficient so long as no one ever wants to refer to the original sources cited rather than the English translations, which you will have on file. However, so far as locating the Japanese documents themselves is concerned, the WDC Document numbers are now no longer of any use, and it is the National Archives (NA) number which is needed. Hence, where these NA numbers are available, do you wish to cite them in addition to the WDC number? In the material forwarded to you herewith, I have given both where available.

I had a well-thumbed copy of the USSBS "Campaigns of the Pacific War" when I was editing the history of Japanese operations out in Tokyo, so I am quite familiar with its contents. Mr. Pineau has a copy in his office, and I have refreshed my memory of what it contains covering the Leyte battle. I referred to it in my list of the basic planning orders submitted to you earlier.

With best wishes, and trusting that the material I am sending you will be useful. I shall try to speed my translation of the background material as much as possible, and also my work on the command set-up.

Sincerely,



Clarke H. Kawakami

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
Rm 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK No. 3

2 Nov 1950

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN
Naval War College
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

As I reported to you earlier, I obtained from the Army Historical Division some time ago the Japanese 2nd Demobilization Bureau (Navy) monographs bearing on the Leyte naval operations. There were three documents which appeared useful to your study, two of them already translated into English and the third (and most useful) available only in Japanese. We could only keep these documents for a limited time, so Mr. Pineau had them photostated, including the English versions of the two monographs already translated. Since one of these latter contains data specifically bearing on your current topics of inquiry - the Japanese planning for Sho No. 1 and general background - and the other on submarine operations will come in handy later, I am forwarding them to you herewith. (2 enclosures marked "Leyte-Sep 1 (CHK-3a + b)")

The English title of one of the monographs, "Naval Air Operations in the Philippines Area, 1942-45", is a title apparently slapped on by Army Hist Div and does not correspond either to the contents of the monograph or its original Japanese title, which is "PHilippine Area Naval Operations, Part I, May 1942 to Sep 1944". If you have occasion to cite the document as a source in your study, I suggest that you use the correctly-translated Japanese title. I will take the matter up with the Army Hist Div with a view to their doing likewise.

I have tabbed portions of this monograph which I think you will be particularly interested in. The part tabbed "Imperial GHQ (Navy) Basic Sho Plans" is actually a summation of Imperial GHQ Navy Section Directives 431 and 435, 21 and 26 July 1944, the Central Army-Navy Agreement on Sho Air Operations having been appended to Directive 435 of 26 July. Both directives were translated in full by WDC and are included in the material presently being retyped in Capt. Burrowes' office. You will therefore have the original documents on which this summary is based.

Similarly, the part tabbed "Combined Fleet Basic Sho Plans, Aug 1944" is ^{apparently/} a summation of the several Combined Fleet orders issued between 1 and 4 Aug 1944, implementing the above Imperial GHQ Navy Directives. Of these orders, only two (Combined Fleet Operations Orders No. 84, 1 Aug; and No. 86, 4 Aug) are available in full in the Nachi documents (ATIS Limited Distribution Translation No. 39, Part VIII). The "Outline of Operations" which was annexed to Operations Order No. 85 of 4 Aug is nowhere available to my knowledge. Hence, the summation given in the 2nd Demob monograph will probably be your only source as to its contents. (Capt. Ohmae in Tokyo indicated to me that the summation in the monograph was "reconstructed" and pieced together from all available sources, documentary and otherwise. I am always highly skeptical about "reconstructed" documents; however, I think that the summation in the

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monograph is essentially accurate and provides an adequate basis for the probably brief, high-light treatment which you will give to the original Sho plans of July-August in your background section.)

I have corrected some of the mis-spellings and mis-translations which I ran across in the ATIS translation of the monograph, and I have also revised parts of the translation to correspond to changes and corrections made in the revised Japanese edition of the monograph put out last year. If you should desire to quote anything from the monograph in your study, I think that it would be wise for you to tell me the portion you wish to use and let me check it very carefully against the revised Japanese edition. This will permit me to improve upon the rather pitiful ATIS translation and make sure that it tallies with the revised Japanese text.

At the page tabbed "Imperial GHQ Navy Directive, 21 Sep 1944", I have supported the brief reference in the monograph text by inserting a translation of the original directive. I used the translation form which I proposed in my letter of two days ago, adding however a brief subject identification in the upper right-hand corner for filing purposes. Please let me know if this form meets with your approval.

The sequel to this monograph, "Philippine Area Naval Operations, Part II, Oct to Dec 1944", is available only in the Japanese original. It contains further background material as well as a rather inadequate treatment of the Sho Operation itself. I am currently translating the parts which you will find useful for the background discussion.

Sincerely,


Clarke H. Kawakami

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
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WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
Rm 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK No. 4

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN
Naval War College
Newport, R.I.

21 Nov 1950

Dear Commodore,

Immediately upon receiving your letter of 3 Nov, I interrupted my work on the Sho No. 1 command set-up in order to research your queries concerning the Japanese fleet dispositions as of 26 September and 20 October 1944. This turned out to be a very difficult and lengthy task since the tabular records of Japanese warships, which should have been the best and only necessary source, are incomplete for destroyers, and what is even more annoying, the records for many ships stopped short prior to September of 1944. It was consequently necessary to scour the Archives for more unit and ship war diaries covering this particular month. The lists of sources appended to Inclosures 1 and 2 will give you a rough idea of the work involved.

Incl 1 lists the dispositions as of 26 Sep 44, using the same geographical breakdown as in Kinkaid's estimate. A comparison of the estimate with the actual dispositions is as follows, the second set of figures in red being the actual disposition figures as worked out in Incl 1:

| Area | BB | CV | CVL | CVE | CA | CL | DD | SS |
|-----------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-------|-------|
| Empire-No. Japan | 4/2* | 5/3 | 5/5 | 1/1 | 3/2 | 7/8 | 16/31 | 50/24 |
| N. Borneo-Philippines | 1/2 | | | | 3/0 | 2/0 | 8/6 | 10/5 |
| Singapore-Lingga | 4/5 | 1/0 | | 3/1 | 8/12 | 1/3 | 18/17 | 5/4 |

*Eyuja and Ise (BB/XCV) are placed in the BB column, since it is presumed that Kinkaid's estimate classified them as BB rather than as CV.

Please note that Kinkaid's totals by category are correct for BB, CVL, and CA, though a bit off on the distribution. His error in placing 4 BB in the Empire area is readily understandable inasmuch as 4 BB were there, in home waters, until 23 Sep, when Batdiv 2 (Fuso, Yamashiro) left for Lingga to join the First Striking Force. Actually, at noon on 26 Sep, Batdiv 2 and its destroyer escort were just passing from the southern periphery of the "Empire area" (which includes Formosa) into northern Philippine waters.

Kinkaid's total for CVs is definitely excessive, although part of the excess might be explained by the possible inclusion of Katsuragi and Shinano, which at this date had been launched but were not yet completed. How he got another CV in the Singapore-Lingga area I can't imagine. He is also off on CVE, for Japan had only two - Kaiyo and Shinyo - left at this date, Unyo having just been sunk on 16 Sep. On CL, he is one too low in his total and somehow gets 2 CL in the Borneo-P.I. area, whereas my research places the bulk in home waters and the rest at Singapore-Lingga. On DD, he would appear to be way off on the low side, but please note that my destroyer list for the Empire-Northern Japan area includes a number of DD which belonged to base or escort forces and perhaps should be excluded from an estimate of actual

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mobile combat strength. On the other hand, Kinkaid's total for submarines seems quite high. The big discrepancy in the Empire-Northern Japan area may be explained by the exclusion, from the Japanese figure of 24 subs, of 20 old craft being used only for training purposes in the Inland Sea area.

Incl 2 lists the dispositions as of 20 Oct, again using a geographical breakdown similar to that of the CINCPAC estimate of that date. Note, however, that my breakdown is for "Lingga-Brunei" instead of "Singapore Area". I don't know whether the CINCPAC estimate meant to include Brunei in the "Singapore Area". If not, it is an important point, for it would mean that he was not yet aware that the heavy Japanese fleet concentration in the Singapore-Lingga area (the First Striking Force) had already displaced from there and moved up to Brunei in preparation for sortie. The exodus from Lingga-Singapore had already taken place early on 18 Oct, and all units of the First Striking Force were at Brunei by late afternoon of 20 October. I am doubtless revealing state secrets in so doing, but I can't resist informing you in this connection that, in the Far East Command history, my erstwhile boss, General (better known as "Prince Charles") Willoughby, was bound and determined to prove that he knew about this displacement of the First Striking Force to Brunei and gave ample warning of it to the Navy. This, of course, is aimed at Admiral Halsey, who ran up north to chase Ozawa's decoy force, leaving San Bernardino Strait unguarded.

But, to get back to the point, assuming that CINCPAC's "Singapore Area" covers Brunei, a comparison of his estimate with the actual dispositions is as follows, the red figures again being the actual disposition figures as worked out in Incl 2:

| Area | BB | CV | BB/XCV | CVL | CVE | CA | CL | DD |
|----------------|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| Empire-Formosa | 3/0 | 6/4 | 2/2 | 5/5 | 3/2 | 4/2 | 7/8 | 20/30 |
| Lingga-Brunei | 4/7 | | | | 1/0 | 11/12 | 1/3 | 20/20 |

The Cincpac total for battleships is again correct, but the estimated distribution way off. Batdiv 2 (Fuso, Yamashiro) reached Singapore from Japan on 2 Oct, putting all seven BB of the fleet in that area. In this estimate, Hyuga and Ise are correctly accounted for in the BB/XCV column. The CV estimate is again excessive, but this time by only two ships, the Katsuragi having been completed and commissioned since the 26 Sep estimate by Kinkaid. CVL are on the nose, CVE again high. CA estimate, this time, is one high, possibly through the inclusion of one of the old training cruisers located in the Inland Sea. In the DD category, the estimate for the Empire area is again somewhat low, although it would be just about right if the Japanese actual figure were scaled down to show only mobile combat strength. The actual total number of destroyers which sortied from home waters in the Mobile Force Main Body and Second Striking Force was 16.

You will note in Incl 2 that the ships of the Mobile Force Main Body are just sortieing on the afternoon of 20 Oct, while those of the Second Striking Force (Crudiv 21 and Desron 1) are at Mako, in the Pescadores. All this will come out as we delve into the background, but a brief expla-

nation at this time will probably do no harm. On 14 October, Combined Fleet had ordered the Second Striking Force to sortie from the Inland Sea to the waters east of Formosa to "wipe up" the supposedly shattered remnants of the American carrier forces striking at Formosa. 2YB sortied as ordered late on 14 Oct and headed south, but on the 16th Combined Fleet realized that the enemy carrier forces were not so "shattered" as the earlier air force reports had indicated, and Admiral Toyoda therefore ordered 2YB to put back to ~~Ami-Gaki, Misaki, and Mako~~ Mako and await orders. The effect of this fiasco was to necessitate a last-minute modification of the Sho No. 1 plan. Under this plan, 2YB was to have sortied with the Mobile Force Main Body from home waters, acting as its Advance Guard. This was now impossible, and on 18 October Combined Fleet transferred 2YB to command of Southwest Area Force and ordered it to refuel at Mako and then proceed to Manila to assist in the movement of troop reinforcements to Leyte. The further change of plan, by which 2YB did after all participate in the Leyte Gulf attack in support of the 3rd Section, 1YB (Nishimura Force), did not come until the 22nd or 23rd, while 2YB was en route from Mako down to Manila.

What precedes, I believe, takes care of your queries concerning the Kinkaid and CINCPAC estimates of 26 Sep and 20 Oct, and also your query (last two paras on p. 1 of your letter of 3 Nov) as to the discrepancy between the CINCPAC estimate of the 20th and my previous report showing only 2 BB/XCV, 1 CV, 3 CVL, 3 CL and 8 DD sortieing from the Inland Sea on 20 Oct. These latter figures, of course, are only the Mobile Force Main Body. As Incl 2 shows, 2YB was also in the Empire area, though it had displaced from Japan Proper to Mako, in the Prescadores.

To take up the other points raised in your letter of the 3rd and your subsequent note of 8 November, first, with reference to the plane strength aboard the Ozawa carriers, I fully realize that you will need a detailed breakdown by plane types for each of the carriers. I have been keeping an eye out for information on this point as I scan the documents and will provide you with everything I have when we get to that point.

In accordance with your instructions, I will provide you shortly with diagrams showing the command set-up for Sho No. 1, first as originally laid down, second as it had been modified up to the time of the Sho No. 1 alert on the 17th of October, and finally as it existed at the time of the action on 24-25 Oct. With these diagrams will go all necessary supporting translations. The delay in giving you this material is due to the fact that I laid it aside in order to research the Kinkaid and CINCPAC estimates. However, it should be ready soon.

With regard to your queries concerning the conflicting times given for the issuance of the Sho No. 1 Alert on 17 Oct, and also regarding the messages sent out by the local Japanese radar lookout post on Suluan, I was going to include with this report a couple of brief extract translations which I have already done. However, I have just located some additional and much better material which clears up the whole business, so I shall translate

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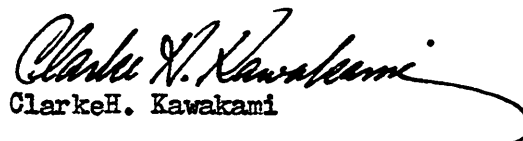
it and send along a separate report within a couple of days covering this subject. I find that, actually, there were two alerts issued, one sent out from Takao air base on Formosa by Admiral Toyoda himself, who was there directing air operations against the American carrier forces during the Formosa air strikes. This was issued at 0809. The second alert was sent out by Combined Fleet headquarters in Japan at 0835. When Toyoda sent out the first alert, he had already received word of the Suluan landing. But all the details will be given in my following report.

As Incl 3, I am forwarding another copy of my previous report so that you will have two copies. The present report is being forwarded in two copies, as will all future reports.

Pineau showed me the CIG Intelligence Forms. They could of course be adapted for use as a form for translations, but I am sure that you do not intend either that I should use the actual CIG form or get something similar printed up specially for my use. Such a form would be fine for mimeographing numerous copies, but I must rely on the typewriter, using onionskin for my carbons. However, perhaps I can improve upon the form I am presently using for my translations by adopting some ideas from the CIG Form. Anyway, I shall try and arrive at something that meets with your satisfaction.

Trust that you will have a pleasant Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,


Clarke H. Kawakami

3 Inclosures:

1. Two copies, "Japanese Fleet Dispositions as of 26 Sep 1944"
2. Two copies, "Japanese Fleet Dispositions as of 20 Oct 1944"
3. One copy previous report on composition and tactical organization of forces involved in Leyte naval action.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY
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Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK No. 5

27 Nov 1950

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN
Naval War College
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

I am forwarding herewith a batch of translations representing all that I have been able to uncover concerning the initial Japanese reports of the Suluan landing and the issuance of the Sho No. 1 Alert. I think that this material provides the answers to the queries contained in your letter of the 3rd with reference to these specific items.

The Zuikaku War Diary was the only document I could find which recorded the messages sent out by the Suluan Lookout Post. From the times of dispatch given for these messages, it would appear that probably only the first had reached Admiral Toyoda, CinC Combined Fleet, on Formosa before he issued the first Sho No. 1 Alert at 0809. The second Suluan message was not sent out until 0801. Toyoda may, however, have received the 0755 dispatch sent out by Third Southern Expeditionary Fleet headquarters at Manila, indicating that the enemy was preparing to land. In any case, there appears to be little doubt that it was the appearance of the American force off Suluan, and not any other development, which impelled Toyoda to issue the Sho No. 1 Alert. The cause-and-effect relationship is quite clearly established in the extracts translated from the daily record of the Operations Section, Naval General Staff.

As I indicated in my last report, sent off on the 21st, the mystery of the two conflicting times mentioned in USSBS' Campaigns of the Pacific War for the Sho No. 1 Alert is explained by the fact that there were actually two Alerts. The first, Combined Fleet Special DesOpOrd No. 14, appears to have been issued by Admiral Toyoda himself directly from Takao, in southern Formosa. This was the 0809 Alert. The second, Combined Fleet DesOpOrd No. 351, was issued by Combined Fleet headquarters in Japan at 0835, apparently in confirmation of Admiral Toyoda's special order and perhaps to assure receipt of the Alert by all commands concerned. Of the two, the later Alert order is more generally recorded in the documentary sources.

I know from my research in Tokyo that Admiral Toyoda was at Shinchiku, in northern Formosa, at the time the U.S. carrier air strikes against the Ryukyus and Formosa began on 10 October. He was on his way back to Tokyo from an inspection visit to the Philippines. Because of the air strikes, he stayed on Formosa to direct the massive counteraction of the Japanese naval land-based air forces, which Toyoda himself ordered on 12 October. This was the activation of the Sho Nos. 1 and 2 Operations for the land-based naval air forces - the all-important prelude to the subsequent Leyte action. Toyoda remained on Formosa until after the issuance of the Sho No. 1 Alert on the 17th, returning to Tokyo on the 18th.

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In addition to the Alert orders proper, I am appending translations of two other messages which followed shortly after the Alert in point of time, and which further bear out the conclusion that Combined Fleet was quick and correct in its estimation of what the Suluan landing foreshadowed. One is the Combined Fleet order, sent out at 0928 on the 17th, directing Admiral Kurita's First Striking Force to move up from Lingga to Brunei in readiness to sortie against the enemy invasion force. The other is a dispatch from the Chief of Staff, Combined Fleet, sent out at 0908 - 59 minutes after the first Alert - warning the Mobile Force Main Body to get ready to sortie in support of the First Striking Force.

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A considerable problem remains in reconciling the Japanese sources with our own as regards the time of the Suluan landing. In your letter of 3 Nov, you mentioned that the initial landing on Suluan was not until 0851. I presume that this is local time. The times given in the Japanese documents, on the other hand, are supposedly Japan Time, since it was the fixed practice of the Japanese armed forces to operate on Japan Time and record everything in terms of that time. This would mean that the initial sighting of enemy ships by the Suluan Lookout was at 0550 local time, and the start of the landing at 0700. Such a big divergence in time is, of course, quite impossible. This leads me to suspect that the Japanese may have been using daylight saving time. It may be necessary to obtain a clarification of this point from Capt Ohmae et al. in Tokyo.

I received this morning your letter of 22 Nov, enclosing the section on "Information Available to the Allied Commander". By this time, you have received my Report No. 4, which I trust provides you with everything you need with respect to the dispositions of the Japanese surface forces, both as of 26vSep and as of 20 Oct. With regard to the other blanks in your MSS, I think offhand that some of the answers can be obtained without too much difficulty. However, the dispositions of air strength in the Philippines area is going to be tough, and it may also prove difficult or impossible to find anything on the locations of minefields.

With specific reference to your subsection 5 on estimated air dispositions, it is not clear to me whether this is an estimate made on 16 Oct of the Japanese aircraft dispositions as of that same date or as ~~if~~ they were expected to be as of a later date, for example as of 20 October when the Leyte landing was to be carried out. Your phraseology is, "As of October 16th he estimated that these aircraft would be located as follows: ..." I would appreciate your clearing up this point, since the time is of the utmost importance.

On the basis of my earlier research on the Leyte campaign in Tokyo, I know that the combined Japanese Army and Navy air strength in the Philippines at the time of the actual American landing on 20 October was not much over 100 planes in operational condition. The First Air Fleet had had an operational strength of about 200 planes as of 12 October, but due to heavy losses between that date and the Leyte landing, it had been reduced to less than 50 planes. Fourth Air Army strength in the Philippines had also been whittled down to about 70 planes as of the Leyte landing. The Sho

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Plans from the outset, however, envisaged the speedy concentration of air forces in any of the Sho areas which might be attacked, such concentration to be effected immediately upon the activation of the Sho Operation applicable to the area attacked. Fourth Air Army strength in the Philippines was to be augmented, in the event of Sho No 1 Activation, by the transfer of units from the Celebes and Borneo areas. The First Air Fleet was to be reinforced by the prompt movement to the Philippines of the Second Air Fleet. In fact, the planned concentration of air strength in the Philippines did not get under way until after the Leyte landing of 20 October and was barely completed by 24 October, when the big air offensive to cover the surface attack on Leyte Gulf was scheduled to begin. If I remember right, the total Army and Navy air strength which had been assembled in the Philippines by the start of the air offensive on the 24th was close to 400 planes. In other words, the picture is of a sudden vast increase in the Japanese air strength in the Philippines from barely more than 100 planes as of 20 Oct to nearly 400 planes as of 24 Oct. This, I think, is quite a different picture from that given by your estimate of the Allied Commander, which gives very much the impression that the Japanese strength is already there and that there will not be much movement of air strength from other areas to the Philippines. This is just diametrically the opposite of what was the case.

I fear that the research on air dispositions will be quite a time-consuming project, particularly since it will require going into the available Army sources in addition to the Navy. Do you wish me to tackle it immediately, or shall I first polish off the study of the Japanese command set-up, which I started but had to put aside before I could complete it? If it is all right with you, I would prefer to go back to the command set-up and finish that off before getting involved in this extensive new inquiry. It is difficult to flit from one thing to another and back again in this sort of work. It requires a considerable degree of concentration.

Before closing this report, I would like to throw in a gratuitous comment regarding the third item of your section on Information Available to the Allied Commander. You state that the commander's estimate of a possible attack by a fast Japanese task force on the American supply lines "was incorrect". It is true, of course, that no such attack materialized. However, Mobile Force Operations Order No. 76, 10 Aug 1944 (Nachi documents, Part I) contains this passage (p. 5 of ATIS Trans): "If it is possible to discern the movements of the enemy supply force and if a good plan for a sudden attack is at hand, this force (Mobile Force Main Body) will come down upon the enemy supply force and annihilate it completely." This indicates that such an attack was very definitely part of the Japanese plan, even if its execution proved impossible. The Allied Commander, on this point at least, pretty accurately read the Japanese mind.

Pineau was to return today from a week's vacation trip to Detroit by auto. He is still missing, however, and we presume that he and his family are buried under a snowdrift somewhere along the way.

Sincerely,

Charles H. Kawakami

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
Room 2517

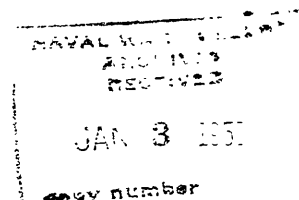
IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK NO. 6

13 Dec 1950

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN
Naval War College
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,



I am forwarding herewith a series of five diagrams showing the operational command structure of the Japanese naval forces earmarked for the Sho No. 1 Operation. The first of these shows the command structure as first set up by Combined Fleet Operations Order No. 84 on 1 August 1944, and the succeeding diagrams show how this structure was successively modified by orders issued at various times between 1 August and 25 October. This will enable you to pick out the command structure applicable to any particular time of your choosing.

To each diagram is attached the translated source material on which it is based. The translation attached to Diagram No. 5, however, also includes some extracts applicable to two of the other diagrams, as I have indicated by pencil annotations in the margin. I typed these extracts on the same page since they were only a line or two in length and came from the same source document.

With regard to the translation of Combined Fleet OpOrd 84, attached to Diagram 1, you may wonder why I do not cite the already existing English translation of it, which is found in ATIS Limited Distribution Translation No. 39, Part VIII (the Nachi document translations). The reason is that this translation was replete with rather glaring errors. So I simply ignored it and made my own translation direct from the Japanese original document. The citation is therefore of the Japanese original, rather than of the ATIS translation.

Diagram 1, you will note, is actually an extract, rendered in different form, of the command dispositions shown in the "Commander" column of the Annexed Table to Combined Fleet OpOrd 84. To complete the command structure on the top, I have added a box for Imperial General Headquarters. This was the top step in the operational chain of command in wartime. Theoretically, of course, the Emperor was on top of the heap as CinC of all Japanese armed forces, but this was in theory only. Also, there was in existence at this time the so-called Supreme Council for Direction of the War. This, however, was a high-level body to coordinate government policy with that of the High Command. The Supreme War Council (a different body) and the Board of Field Marshals and Fleet Admirals also should not be included in any diagram of the strictly operational command, since they were largely honorary in nature and merely advisory to the Emperor. I note that your Savo Island study places the Supreme War Council at the top of the Japanese command structure (Plate 1), but this is not correct, as I have just indicated.

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On the subject of the top-level command structure, I should also proffer a word of explanation as to why the Naval General Staff, which your diagram in the Savo Island study shows between the Supreme War Council and CinC Combined Fleet, does not appear in my diagram. The reason is that operational directives were issued to CinC Combined Fleet from the Navy Section of Imperial GHQ, not from the Naval General Staff. The Naval General Staff, indeed, was to a large extent incorporated in the Navy Section of Imperial GHQ. The key General Staff officers were at the same time staff officers of Imperial GHQ, and the Chief of Naval General Staff was the top dog in the Imperial GHQ Navy Section. Imperial GHQ Navy Section Directives were issued over the signature of the Chief of Naval General Staff. The same thing holds for the Army Section and Army General Staff.

It is difficult for me to provide you with a convenient source reference covering the explanations I have given you in the last two paragraphs, for the Japanese, at least to my knowledge, never issued any document which concisely and comprehensively explained their military command organization. The best thing I can lay my hands on at the moment is a written statement by Capt. Ohmae, which Roger obtained in Tokyo. Roger is having a copy typed up at my request, and if it is finished in time, I will enclose it with this report.

To get back to Diagram 1, it covers just those forces which had some role, either principal or supporting, in the Sho No. 1 Operation. The 7th Base Air Force was to be reserve in case of Sho No. 1, and I believe that the 3rd Base Air Force was only to provide reinforcements to the naval air forces in the Philippines. The Philippines Force, I think, should be included although it was primarily a local defense command with no substantial surface strength. All the real surface combat strength for the planned decisive battle in the various Sho areas was included in the Mobile Force.

I have limited my present diagrams to the naval command structure, but as I told Commander Hartmann during his recent visit, I will try and work up a diagram of the corresponding Army command set-up, so that it can be worked in to the extent that you may deem necessary. Here again, it would be simple if all I had to do were to draw you a diagram, for I know what the Army command set-up was and could put it down on paper in five minutes flat. However, finding "references" for it is another matter. I am exploring to find what material Army Historical Division has on the subject.

I was very happy to have the opportunity to meet Commander Hartmann and only regret that he could not stay longer. We had a good talk regarding various problems, and I hope that he went away with a better understanding of the translation situation.

I am currently working on the footnotes for your revised discussion of the Kinkaid estimate of 26 September. You will get them shortly, and I think they will illustrate to you, better than any explanation, why I stubbornly contend that a single footnote listing all sources covering


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the specific subject of the actual Japanese dispositions on 26 September is far less cumbersome than attempting to apportion the sources to different categories of ships. As I endeavored to explain to Commander Hartmann, I entirely agree with the principle of specific footnotes covering specific points in the text. However, there are times when even the best of historians - including Capt. Morison - depart from this practice when it appears desirable in order to avoid a congestion of footnotes largely repetitious in nature. In any case, I shall try to give you the footnotes as you desire them, and please be assured that I do fully understand what you want, even though I reserve the right to disagree with you on the feasibility of a hard-and-fast adherence to the general rule in all instances such as the present one.

The question of the conflict in times for the Suluan landing was fully cleared up in your letter and my subsequent conversation with Commander Hartmann. If the American records use Japan Time, that disposes of the entire problem since the Japanese always used Japan Time regardless of the area. I was under the mistaken impression that our records for the Leyte operation used local Philippine time.

Will be forwarding the pages with footnotes inserted shortly.

Sincerely,


Clarke H. Kawakami

P.S. The Ohmae statement on the top-level command has not yet been typed, so I will have to forward it on separately, probably tomorrow.

Incls

5 diagrams of Japanese command structure with supporting translations attached, all in duplicate.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
Rm 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK NO. 7

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN
Naval War College
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

I am forwarding herewith copies of the Ohmae statement, which I promised you in my last report. This is not a translation. Capt. Ohmae wrote it up himself in English, which explains the rather peculiar grammar. Despite the grammatical errors, the meaning is sufficiently clear.

Glancing over the statement again, I realize that it does not cover all the points contained in my brief explanation of the top-level command structure. The statement was actually prepared by Capt. Ohmae to supplement an oral question-and-answer discussion he had with Capt. Morison on the subject of the top-level Japanese command system. Roger Pineau does have a transcript of this discussion, and if you would like a copy of it, perhaps we could get it retyped. I rather hesitated to send it to you because it is almost as confusing as it is helpful to someone who does not already know the subject pretty well. The reason for the confusion was that neither Capt. Morison nor Ohmae understood exactly what the other was talking about for a good part of the discussion. Nevertheless, the transcript does bring out some of the essential points of the command set-up, which I mentioned in my last letter. Please let me know if you would like to have it.

Have completed work on the footnotes for the first part of your section on "Information Available to the Allied Commander". Am having the pages retyped with the footnotes inserted and will forward them as soon as the typing is completed. I will continue now with the other parts of the section dealing with the estimate of air strength, etc.

You will be interested to know that I finally managed to uncover in the National Archives the missing Action Report of Mogami covering the Surigao battle. That will give us two source documents covering the action, the report of Mogami and that of the DD Shigure, which was the only ship to survive the action. The Mogami report contains a statement at the beginning to the effect that the ship's records were lost, and that the report was written up largely on the basis of accounts given by the survivors. Nevertheless, the report does contain specific times and quite a bit of detailed information.

Sincerely,

Clarke H. Kawakami
Clarke H. Kawakami

Incl. - Statement by Capt. Toshikazu Ohmae, IJN

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND HISTORY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Room 2517

IN REPLY REFER TO

CHK No. 8

21 Dec 1950

Commodore R.W. Bates, USN
Naval War College
Newport, R.I.

Dear Commodore,

The retyping of the five pages of your section on "Information Available to the Allied Commander", with footnote references filled in, has been completed, and I am forwarding back to you herewith both the working copy which you sent to me and two additional retyped copies. I have retained one retyped copy for my file in case any further question arises in connection with my footnotes. The typist, apparently to avoid having to respace the text so as to make room for the footnotes, used legal-size paper instead of standard. If this inconveniences you, please let me know, and I will make sure next time that standard-size paper is used.

I took the liberty of making a couple of small corrections in your text. On line 8 of page 3, you had your numbers twisted around on the light cruisers. In the next to last sentence on page 4, I changed the word "completed" to "commissioned". I think this is preferable because the important fact is that Katsuragi, on that date, was both commissioned and assigned to Cardiv 1, thus becoming part of the Combined Fleet.

You will note a great deal of duplication in the source references; numerous documents being cited repeatedly. This was my primary reason for being so stubborn in favoring the use of a single footnote listing all sources covering the Japanese dispositions as of 26 September. That way, you would be burdened with only one long footnote. This way, you have numerous lengthy footnotes repeating the same source citations, something that seems particularly cumbersome when combined with the use of asterisks rather than numbering.

Some of this duplication could be eliminated through using the same footnote to cover the statements in the text regarding both the total number and the distribution of any one category of ships. In general, you asked for two separate footnotes on each category, one covering the total number and the other covering the distribution. However, both these things had to be worked from the same sources for each category.

One further point: in your para (c) on page 5, where you discuss the CINCPAC estimate of 20 October, you say that "all battleships except the Ise and Hyuga were in the Lingga-Singapore area." This harks back to the question I raised in my Report No. 4, 21 Nov. As I pointed out, by 20 October the entire First Striking Force had displaced from Lingga to Brunei in preparation for sortie. Hence, it is strictly not correct to say that all battleships were in the "Lingga-Singapore area", unless it is clearly understood that this area, as defined, includes North Borneo. My guess is that CINCPAC, on 20 Oct, was not yet aware of the displacement to Brunei.

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At any rate, it strikes me that this aspect of the CINCPAC estimate of 20 October is at least as important as whether he correctly estimated the distribution of Japanese fleet strength as between Empire waters and the general Southeast Asia area. This particularly if, on 20 October, the earlier estimate of 26 September that there would be no major reaction by the Japanese Fleet to our landing on Leyte still was entertained. The sudden displacement of the First Striking Force from Lingga to Brunei between 18 and 20 October, had it been immediately known, would have been a sure tip-off that this estimate was mistaken.

Your letter of 18 December has just come in, and I thank you for your Christmas wishes. In turn, permit me to convey my own best wishes for a gay and festive holiday season and for a highly successful New Year.

Sincerely,


Clarke H. Kawakami

Incl.

Original & two copies of draft,
"Information Available to Allied Commander"

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